Calgary East Ring Road

Environmental Assessment

- Environmental assessment is part of Alberta Transportation's functional planning process
- Because the East Freeway project may receive some federal funding, and environmental review under the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act (CEAA) is also required
- The East Freeway project will require a CEAA environmental screening level assessment that examines soils, surface and groundwater, vegetation, wildlife, fish and social impacts (e.g., recreational land use, noise)
- Baseline studies of soils, rare plants, waterfowl and other wildlife completed over fall 2002 to summer 2003
- Public consultation is an important part of the CEAA process. The public is invited to comment on potential environmental issues and to provide environmental information pertaining to the project review through open houses, including this session.

Calgary East Ring Road

Existing Environment

- TUC Extends about 41 km along east Calgary
- Although mostly under agricultural use, some natural habitat exists:
  - Aspen groves
  - Numerous small to large wetlands (about 86)
  - Alkaline wetlands (southeast TUC)
- Two rare plant species found in wetlands along TUC
- Several rare bird species around Shepard Slough area

Calgary East Ring Road

Potential Impacts and Mitigation Strategies

- Impact analysis is iterative – identify concerns, revise design, re-evaluate impacts.
- Potential impact to wetlands is a key environmental issue for this project
- Initial impact analysis by project team and environmental stakeholders for the East Freeway project resulted in revised alignment
- Now completing impact analysis of finalized design
- East Freeway will largely avoid wetlands and other sensitive natural features but some sites will still be impacted and will require mitigation
- Principle for mitigation: Miss, Minimize or Mitigate (Compensate)

Potential Impact	Proposed Mitigation Approach
Loss of rare plants or rare plant communities	• Avoid or minimize loss of wetlands in positioning road alignment & interchanges (done in design) • Compensate wetland loss: - Wetland enhancement or creation - Upland habitat enhancement • Stormwater management to maintain SW in TUC • Management of entire TUC natural area to sustain plants and wildlife (e.g., timing mowing programs to avoid duck nesting)
Impact to rare or sensitive wildlife species	
Loss of aquatic habitat for waterfowl and other wildlife	
Saline soils	
Groundwater discharge/recharge and surface water drainages	